Por. The qualitie of mercy is not ſtraind,
It droppeth as the gentle raine from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice bleſt,
It bleſſeth him that gives, and him that takes.
Tis mightieſt in the mightieſt, it becomes
The throned Monarch better then his Crowne.
His ſceptor ſhewes the force of temporall power,
The attribute to awe and majeſtie,
Wherein doth ſit the dread and feare of Kings:
But mercy is above this ſceptred ſway,
It is enthroned in the hearts of Kings,
It is an attribute to God himſelfe;
And earthly power doth then ſhew likeſt gods,
When mercy ſeaſons juſtice: therefore Jew,
Though juſtice be thy plea, conſider this,
That in the courſe of juſtice none of us
Should ſee ſalvation: we do pray for mercy,
And that ſame prayer, doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have ſpoke thus much
To mittigate the juſtice of thy plea,
Which if thou follow, this ſtrict Court of *Venice*
Muſt needs give ſentence 'gainſt the Merchant there.

Shy. My deeds upon my head, I crave the Law,
The penalty and forfeit of my Bond.

Por. Is he not able to diſcharge the money?

Baſſ. Yes, here I tender it for him in the Court,
Yea, twice the ſumme, if that will not ſuffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times ore
On forfeit on my hands, my head, my heart;
If this will not ſuffice, it muſt appeare
That malice beares down truth. And I beſeech you
Wreſt once the Law to your authority,
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curbe this cruell Devill of his will.

Por. It muſt not be, there is no power in *Venice*
Can alter a Decree eſtabliſhed:
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
And many an errour by the ſame example

Will ruſh into the ſtate, it cannot be.

Shy. A *Daniel* come to judgement
O wiſe young Judge, how I do honou

Por. I pray you let me looke upon

Shy. Here 'tis moſt reverend Doct

Por. Shylocke, there's thrice thy mo

Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oat
Shall I lay perjury upon my ſoule?
No, not for *Venice*.

Por. Why this Bond is forfeit,
And lawfully by this the Jew may cla
A pound of fleſh, to be by him cut off,
Neereſt the Merchants heart: be merc
Take thrice thy money, bid me teare
Shy. When it is paid according to
It doth appeare you are a worthy Jud
You know the law, your expoſition
Hath been moſt ſound: I charge you
Whereof you are a well deſerving Pil
Proceed to judgement: by my ſoule
There is no power in the tongue of
To alter me, I ſtay here on my Bond.

Ant. Moſt heartily I do beſeech th
To give the judgement.

Por. Why than thus it is,
You muſt prepare your boſome for hi

Shy. O noble judge, O excellent yo

Por. For the intent and purpoſe of
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the

Iew. Tis very true: O wiſe and up
How much more elder art thou then

Por. Therefore lay bare your boſo

Iew. I, his breaſt,
So ſayes the Bond, doth it not noble ju
Neereſt his heart, thoſe are the very w

Por. It is ſo, are there ballance here

Iew. I have them ready.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *Merchant of Venice* (STC 22298) LONDON, 1637 THE BRITISH LIBRARY (C.34